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ABSTRACT

This guide presents a wide cross-section of approaches, experiences, and ideas for a useful starting point for those thinking of establishing an international initiative in history teaching. This guide grew out of a meeting of representatives of innovative history projects in the Council of Europe. The projects identified offer approaches to teaching history in Europe in the spirit of the Vienna Declaration and provide curriculum developers and teachers with practical advice. Contents include a foreword and two sections. Section 1, "Descriptions of the Projects," contains (1) "The Projects" and (2) "Description of the Projects." Section 2, "How to Set Up An International School History Project," includes (1) "Selection of a Topic"; (2) "The Final Product"; (3) "Who Will Take Part?"; (4) "Finding Contacts"; (5) "Managing Your Project"; (6) "Visits and Exchanges"; (7) "Electronic Communications"; (8) "Raising Money"; and (9) "Postscript." Appendices offer a selected bibliography, list of member associations of the European Standing Conference of History Teachers' Associations (EUROCLIO), and a list of participants. (EH)

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History without frontiers

A Practical Guide to International History Projects in Schools in Europe

SO 028 575

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Strasbourg 1996

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HISTORY WITHOUT FRONTIERS

A Practical Guide to International History Projects in Schools in Europe

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Foreword

The boundaries of the past are not the boundaries of today. This is obviously true of geography. One has only to look at an historical atlas to see the endlessly shifting frontiers of European history. Europe has plenty of towns and regions which have at different times they have borne different names and belonged to different nation states.

But it is true also in another sense: the mental boundaries with which we divide our world have not always been the same. We no longer feel ourselves part of Christendom, as people did in the Middle Ages, nor as part of the Roman world. Our mental map of Europe has changed dramatically since 1989, with the re-emergence of countries like the Ukraine from historical maps to current affairs. We no longer think of Europe in strict terms of East and West, of "Us" and "Them".

This has profound implications for the teaching of history. Across the continent, history is taught within the national or regional educational systems of European states, and in consequence it tends to be dominated by what we term "national" history. Yet national history is frequently a distortion of the way in which people actually operated in the past. The world of the Vikings includes Scandinavia, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Northern France, the Baltic, the Mediterranean, Constantinople, Iceland, Greenland and the rivers of Russia: to study them from a purely national perspective is to display a profound misunderstanding of the period[1].

Much the same is true of other periods. The medieval Hanseatic League, the overseas voyages of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries or the French Revolution - all of which have been the subject of Council of Europe Teachers Courses through the Council of Europe In-Service Training Programme for Teachers (formerly the Teacher Bursary Scheme)[2] - belong properly to no single "national" history, but to the history of the continent as a whole. A list of themes in European history which lend themselves well to this approach was drawn up at the

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1 For a fuller discussion, see The Viking Age in Europe, Council of Europe/Statens Laererkurs, Oslo, 1986

2 For example:
Teaching about the 'Portuguese Discoveries in Renaissance Europe' in Secondary Schools in Western Europe, Council of Europe ,1983;
Portuguese Expansion in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries and the World Encounter of Cultures, Council of Europe, 1984;
Teaching About the French Revolution in Secondary Schools in Europe ,Council of Europe, 1988;
The French Revolution and its Consequences in Europe, Council of Europe, 1988;
The Hanse in Norway and Europe, Council of Europe, 1992;
The History of the Baltic Sea - a History of Conflicts, Council of Europe, 1993.

Council of Europe symposium "History Teaching in Secondary Education" held in Elsinor in 1965. This list was extended by the symposium on "History Teaching in the New Europe" held in Brugge in 1991. The texts of both symposia are contained in Against Bias and Prejudice (Council of Europe 1995).

To the teacher wishing to give a real picture of the way things were in the past, therefore, an international approach to history teaching should not be seen as a luxury or an indulgence, but rather as an integral part of a realistic and professional approach to the subject. The 1993 Council of Europe Summit of Heads of State and Government in Vienna declared its member States' support for:

> "strengthening programmes aimed at eliminating prejudice in the teaching of history by emphasising positive mutual influence between different countries, religions and ideas in the historical development of Europe"[3].

To the teacher in the classroom, however, this is considerably easier to talk about than to put into practice. What does an "international approach" actually mean? If it means teaching a little more about one or two more countries, then it may not be an impossible task, but if it means getting involved in exchanges or links with other schools, many history teachers will naturally want to proceed with extreme caution. Language teachers are used to the central importance of international connections in their work, but it is an idea that comes less readily, perhaps, to many history teachers.

The administrative tasks can appear daunting. There is the problem of finding suitable links in different countries; then there are language and communications problems, not to mention the basic question of who is actually to do what. School systems differ markedly within Europe, so that it is all too possible to find a school which teaches pupils of the right age, but which teaches them something totally different. Finally, of course, though no-one will consider it the least of the problems to be solved, there is the thorny question of how the venture is to be paid for.

This is a formidable collection of problems. Happily, however, there is no shortage of help at hand for any teacher thinking of embarking on an international venture. There exist written guides and handbooks, some of which will be referred to later. Even more usefully, perhaps, there are many teachers and others involved in education across Europe who have set up or taken part in a remarkably wide range of international projects.

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[3]The Vienna Delcaration, Council of Europe Summit of Heads of State and Government, Vienna, October 1993.

In 1995, the Council of Europe's Directorate of Education, Culture and Sport held a meeting in Strasbourg of "Representatives of regional and multilateral school history pilot projects". This meeting formed a part of a wider activity on history teaching which had been set up in response to the Vienna Declaration mentioned above. The aim of the Project is to identify innovatory approaches to the teaching of history in Europe in the spirit of the Vienna Declaration, and to provide curriculum developers and teachers with practical advice.

At this meeting, representatives from 19 very different European projects met to pool their various experiences and to exchange ideas. They were selected because they were projects which had come to the attention of the Council of Europe's Directorate of Education, Culture and Sport; they by no means constitute an exhaustive list, nor are they presented here as any sort of model which others should feel obliged to follow. They do, however, represent a wide cross-section of approaches, experiences and ideas, and, as such, they form an extremely useful starting point for anyone thinking about establishing an international initiative in history teaching.

SECTION ONE

DESCRIPTIONS OF THE PROJECTS

1. THE PROJECTS

Most, though not all, of the projects listed here were discussed at the Strasbourg meeting of representatives of regional and multilateral school history pilot projects. They are grouped for convenience in categories corresponding roughly to their major distinguishing features. However, many of projects could fit into more than one of the categories given here. They are described in more detail in the next section. Contact addresses for these projects are given in Appendix III.

1.1 Simulation and Role-Playing Exercises

- Role-Playing Project on "The Pilgrim Ways of Santiago Compostela"
- European Conference for Final Year Pupils on the Paris Peace Conference and the Treaty of Versailles

1.2 Local and Heritage Education

- European Heritage Classes
- Pilot Project: "School Twinning and Local History"
- The "City Beneath the City" Project
- the Prague Freedom Trail*
- Democracy, Human Rights and Minorities: Educational and Cultural Aspects Pilot Project No.4 "History and Identity"
- The Association of Castles and Museums Around the Baltic Sea
- Council of Europe Cultural Routes
- Council of Europe Cultural Routes Project: "Hanseatic Sites, Routes and Monuments"
- Young Historian Scheme*

* Indicates projects not represented at the Strasbourg meeting 6-7 July 1995.

1.3 **Regional Initiatives**

- the Baltic Sea Project
- the Blue Danube River Project
- the School Viking Network

1.4 **In-Service Training**

- PHARE/EUROCLIO Project 1994/5
- the Council of Europe's In-Service Training Programme for Teachers (formerly the Teacher Bursary Scheme)

1.5 **Curriculum Planning**

- the European Studies Project:
- the European Studies Junior and Senior Programmes
- History Teaching and Confidence Building: the Case of Central and Eastern Europe*
- Harmonisation and Innovation in History Teaching in Ibero-American States
- Local History and Minorities: Pilot Project 2: Central Europe and the Middle Ages
- the Europe at School / European Schools' Day Competition*

1.6 **Publishing Initiatives**

- the Baltic States History Textbook Project
- the Balkan Region History Project

1.7 **School Twinning**

- Twinning of Albanian Schools

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* Indicates projects not represented at the Strasbourg meeting 6-7 July 1995.

1.8 The Work of UNESCO

- ASPRO
- World Heritage Classes

2. DESCRIPTIONS OF THE PROJECTS

2.1 Simulation and Role-Playing Exercises

Simulation is one of the most powerful teaching methods available to the history teacher. It comes in different forms, from relatively small-scale exercises to large simulations recreating major events in considerable detail. The two projects presented here represent both ends of the scale.

The Role-Playing Project on "The Santiago Compostela Pilgrim Ways"

Medieval pilgrims travelled to the shrine of St James at Compostela from all over Europe, and, in the project presented by Ms Marta BATANERO, pupils follow the trail in the company of an imaginary pilgrim from the Twelfth Century. In accompanying him on his pilgrimage, they have to make decisions for him and construct his journey through role-play. The role play has been extended through a pilot programme to involve four European schools, which helps to stress the pan-European aspect of the great medieval pilgrimages. This particular theme also links in usefully with the Council of Europe's Cultural Routes programme, outlined below.

The European Conference for Final Year Pupils on the Paris Peace Conference and the Treaty of Versailles

The Paris Peace Conference of 1919 ended the First World War and laid a strong foundation for the Second. The project presented by Mr Sean LANG brings together school students from different European countries to play the roles of diplomats and statesmen at Versailles and to negotiate as far as possible within the same constraints that the real statesmen experienced at the time. The students are under no obligation to come up with the same set of treaties as were drawn up in 1919: the idea is to recreate the conditions in Paris which forged the 1919 treaties, and, thereby, to provide a deeper understanding both of the treaties and of different European perspectives on the Paris settlement - a settlement whose implications we are still struggling with today.

2.2 Local and Heritage Education

It is easy to fall into the mistake of thinking of local history as essentially a parochial pursuit. In fact, it holds immense possibilities for international contacts.

European Heritage Classes

These classes, presented at the meeting by Mr Serge GRAPPIN, were launched in France in 1982, with an international launch in 1989 based on the Rhine to mark the Council of Europe's 40th anniversary. The classes bring together school students from different countries at a site of historic interest to explore it in depth, through archaeology, language, art, music and theatre. It is important both that pupils should be physically transported from their usual environment to the site, and that the work should, as far as possible, be integrated into the normal pattern of their studies. In this way, pupils can begin to appreciate how the site illustrates not a "foreign" culture, but part of a common historical experience. The results of these classes include the production of booklets, a video and a regular bulletin, as well as exchanges between participating schools.

Pilot Project: "School Twinning and Local History"

Mr Olivier JEHIN reported on this pilot project, which promotes twinning arrangements between schools in European countries situated far apart, and between those schools with fewer opportunities to twin. The emphasis is on twinning classes rather than whole-schools. Rather than the pupils leaving home and descending on a particular site, the idea is for the twinned classes to study their own local areas first, and then to visit and study each others' country. The project aims to develop an awareness in the pupils that the whole of Europe's history is a history of migration. In this way, it uses local history to combat the influence which ethnocentric, xenophobic or racist ideas can exert on young people. The themes chosen have been general enough to allow for a multidisciplinary approach, so the idea is not confined to history teachers, although local history does remain at the heart of the project. Mr Jehin mentioned the example of a theme like food, which had revealed to astonished French eyes how their beloved croissants had come to France from the Ottoman Empire by way of Vienna! The materials produced by the twinned schools bear witness to the feasibility of this simple, flexible project, which can be used in both primary and secondary classes, and which lends itself readily to a multidisciplinary and multicultural approach. The project now involves schools in 16 European countries, from as far afield as Iceland, Bulgaria, Portugal and Russia.

The "City Beneath the City" Project

Ms Francoise JURION WAHA explained how this project takes towns carefully chosen by archaeologists and a handbook prepared by English Heritage, and requires pupils under 12 to prepare projects on the archaeology of one of the towns, with a particular stress upon its European aspects. The best projects are selected by an international jury and the winners receive prizes from the Council of Europe. Ms Jurion Waha also stressed that a similar approach is possible by following a city trail, which uses theme-based material to explain the significance of particular buildings and monuments.

The Prague Freedom Trail

An example of such a trail has been established by the Comenius Centre in Charles University, Prague. Its Freedom Trail guides visitors around the many sites in Prague connected with moments in the struggle for freedom and democracy, particularly in the Twentieth Century

Democracy, Human Rights and Minorities: Educational and Cultural Aspects Pilot Project No.4 "History and Identity"

The link between local history and the development of national identity lies behind this project presented by Professor Anton PELINKA. Based in Eastern and Central Europe, where national identity remains a highly emotive subject, the project aims to show how international, and indeed inter-dependent, "national" identities really are, by bringing pupils and teachers together on fieldwork projects to explore the local history - and, therefore, also the sense of identity - of their neighbours. The precise focus of the work can vary - disappeared monuments have featured, as have street names - for in a sense the method, getting young people from these different areas to work together, is the goal. However, the project also has an academic side, and involves a series of seminars bringing experts and teachers together to discuss the relative nature of national identity in the light of the pupils' work in the field.

The Association of Castles and Museums Around the Baltic Sea

Museums play a vital role in any heritage education, and Ms Ina LINE's presentation showed that museums are keen to take a lead in the development of international initiatives. The Association of Castles and Museums around the Baltic Sea brings together 41 sites from all the Baltic countries, and since 1992 it has run an annual summer camp at Bauska Castle in Latvia. Here the participants have been older students, aged 18-23, and they take part in restoration and renovation work within the castle. This combination of a residential experience, practical work and the possibility to get to know Latvian history in greater depth has proved a very rich educational experience. It could, of course, serve as a model for similar initiatives elsewhere.

Council of Europe Cultural Routes

The Council of Europe's Cultural Routes programme consists of a series of routes passing through a number of European countries, linking sites which illustrate a particular theme of European history. The Silk Routes follow the paths of the textile trades which dominated Medieval and Early Modern Europe, while other routes explore the worlds of the Celts, the Vikings, the Monasteries and the Baroque. Resources are being developed to support these routes, and, although the stress has so far been on making use of tourism, there is great potential here for schools to use the routes as a way of exploring themes relevant to their locality in their wider European context. The Council of Europe publishes a newsletter to publicise developments in the Cultural Routes programme, and a teacher conference held at Donaueschingen in November 1994 under the Council's Teacher In-Service Training Scheme investigated ways in which the Danube Route might be used as a historical route for education[4].

Council of Europe Cultural Routes Project: "Hanseatic Sites, Routes and Monuments"

If schools are to make full use of these routes, then clearly high quality resources will be essential. Dr Gun WESTHOLM of the Historical Museum of Gotland, in Visby, presented the very full book of support materials she is producing on the new Hanseatic Sites, Routes and Monuments Route. It serves as a detailed background history of the Hanse, with maps and illustrations, and brief descriptions of 54 "highly recommended" towns that deserve or are worth a visit. As well as being a highly professional piece of history publishing, the book serves as a model of resources for the Council of Europe Cultural Routes.

Young Historian Scheme

This is a scheme run by the Historical Association of the United Kingdom. It aims to support good work in schools, to reward and disseminate such work. Its motto is " local, relevant, detailed and accurate". They provide some funding and award prizes for winning projects. They produce a regular newsletter.

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[4] The Danube - a European Cultural Route Council of Europe Teacher Seminar, Donaueschingen, 21-26 November 1994, Council of Europe, 1995

2.3 Regional Initiatives

The Baltic Sea Project

The Baltic region, where the Hanseatic merchants operated, has been the basis for some time of one of the best examples of an international educational initiative. Presented at the Strasbourg meeting by Ms Siv SELLIN, the Baltic Sea Project[5] began life as a venture in geography and environmental education. Schoolchildren in all countries round the Baltic undertook environmental investigations into the state of the Baltic in their particular region, and they shared the results of their investigations with each other through extensive use of electronic communications. Although the project retains a strong environmental central theme, it has spread out to involve other subjects, including English, drama, music and art. There is a regular newsletter, written in English, to which participating schools and pupils contribute, and a number of schools have established twinning arrangements as a result of contacts made through participation in the project.

The Blue Danube River Project

Like the Baltic Sea Project, the Blue Danube River Project began under the auspices of the UNESCO Associated Schools Project (ASPRO). It was presented to the meeting by Ms Yordanka NENOVA. Here too there is a strong environmental education theme; it has, in fact, been difficult to introduce much history into the project because of the political controversy which it triggers off. Another major practical difficulty has been the war in former Yugoslavia. Despite these setbacks, however, the project does show that it is possible to extend the Baltic Sea Project model to other parts of Europe.

The School Viking Network

Both the Baltic Sea and Blue Danube Projects make extensive use of electronic communication; the Viking Network, presented by Mr Wigo SKRAMM takes this a stage further by placing e-mail and the Internet at the heart of the project itself. Here the idea is for participating schools to study the Vikings in their own area, and to use electronic communications to share their findings with each other. Use of the Internet allows them to place their findings into a central "bank" of resources to which all the schools have access. They thereby get a much fuller and more accurate idea of the world in which the Vikings actually moved. Using e-mail and the Internet is easy and does not take long to get used to, although Mr Skramm had found that some teachers thought that any project that made use of such things could not, by definition, produce serious history! While the attraction of a subject like the Vikings will be obvious to many history teachers, Mr Skramm was at pains to stress that the subject matter is of secondary importance: it could

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[5] The Baltic Sea Project is described in more detail in: The Baltic Sea Project, Council of Europe, 1995.

just as easily be based upon the development of the potato or, indeed, any aspect of life in the past.

2.4 In-Service Training

So far all these projects have involved the participation of pupils or students, but what about their teachers? What opportunities are there for them to meet together and to share experiences, ideas and outlooks?

PHARE/EUROCLIO Project 1994/5

Ms Joke VAN DER LEEUW-ROORD outlined the work undertaken by EUROCLIO (the European Standing Conference of History Teachers' Associations). EUROCLIO has started to develop in-service training courses for teachers based upon particular themes. 1995, for example, saw EUROCLIO conferences on the Potsdam Conference and on Philip II and Europe. In addition, the PHARE/EUROCLIO Project has enabled teams of history teachers from the member countries of EUROCLIO to visit participating countries to look in depth at how history is taught in different countries and to exchange views and ideas on aspects of history teaching.

Council of Europe In-Service Training Programme for Teachers (formerly the Teacher Bursary Scheme)

The main provider of this sort of in-service training has long been the Council of Europe itself, through its Teacher Bursary Scheme. Ms Monika GOODENOUGH-HOFFMANN explained how this has been revised and renamed the Council of Europe In Service Training Programme for Teachers. Courses will be advertised more widely, and their themes will be chosen to link more directly with other Council of Europe programmes - the Donaueschingen Course on the Danube Route being an example of this in practice. It is also hoped that teachers will work more on particular themes which they explore in depth, thereby encouraging teachers to build up expertise on particular topics.

2.5 Curriculum Planning

One of the most difficult constraints on regional and multilateral pilot projects is imposed by the curriculum itself. International projects demand an investment not just of money but of time, and the curriculum is not always flexible enough to allow for this. Sometimes the answer is to integrate international project work into the existing curriculum, as some of the projects outlined above have done. There were, however, some examples of projects that had managed, to some extent, to shape their own curriculum.

The European Studies Project:
European Studies Junior and Senior Programmes

One of the most important examples is the European Studies Project, presented at the meeting by Mrs Anne FAY. It began in Northern Ireland 1986 and has since spread to some 300 schools across Europe. Like other projects, such as the Baltic Sea Project or the Viking Network, it involves pupils working in their own schools and then communicating with their counterparts in other countries through extensive use of electronic communication. Unlike other projects, it has its own curriculum and assessment pattern.

The Junior Programme covers five themes and an introductory unit. Three of the five themes are historical, and these - the Normans, Plantations and Conflict 1914-1921 - are chosen as case studies to illustrate the local, national and European contexts in which people operated in the past. The unit on the Normans, for example, involves case studies in Ireland, England and continental Europe. All of these units are supported by full and well produced resource packs produced by the project. The Senior Programme is less centrally prescribed; international clusters of schools investigate particular problems and produce video reports, which are then assessed for the Certificate in Contemporary European Studies, awarded by the Associated Examining Board, one of the A Level examining boards in the United Kingdom.

History Teaching and Confidence Building: the Case of Central and Eastern Europe

Unfortunately, Mr BATSYN was not able to be present in Strasbourg to introduce his report on work in progress on this project. A seminar, jointly sponsored by the Council of Europe and the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation, held in Smolensk in April 1995, looked carefully at history teaching in the Russian Federation and in her neighbouring states. It concentrated, in particular, on ways in which teachers ought to approach controversial or sensitive issues. There was a particular emphasis on the history of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. The results of this seminar include guidelines for teacher trainers and textbook authors, and a formal statement of aims for history teaching, emphasising the importance of fostering mutual understanding and respect. The Statement has been forwarded to the relevant education authorities in Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

Harmonisation and Innovation in History Teaching in Ibero-American States

Ms Maria Carmen GONZALEZ MUNOZ's introduced the project on harmonisation and innovation in history teaching in Ibero-American states. This project began as an investigation of history teaching in Ibero-American schools, focusing particularly on the teaching of Ibero-American history. The idea was to try to bridge the gap between perceptions on historical events in Spain and Portugal, and those current in Latin America. Having undertaken the necessary research, the project then made

recommendations to education ministries, and it appears that these recommendations are being accepted. Once that has happened, there will still be a need for a lot more work, in teacher training, textbooks and in-service training. Even so, the initial report sounded extremely positive.

Local History and Minorities: Pilot Project 2: Central Europe and the Middle Ages

Mrs Silvia MATUSOVA described the early stages of a similar project being prepared by the post communist countries of Central Europe[6]. Its initial aim is to run workshops and seminars bringing together academics and history teachers in the region to discuss the pedagogical implications of teaching about the Middle Ages in a Central European context. The exchange of ideas from these seminars will then help to inform textbook authors and teacher trainers, and it is also hoped that the project's findings will be able to be incorporated into future curriculum development in the region.

The Europe at School / European Schools' Day Competition

The Europe at School/European Schools' Day Competition has been running since 1953. Each year a number of themes are put forward by the Competition's national and European committees, and participating schools take these as a basis for study, producing work in either written or art form for consideration for a prize. The prize-giving ceremonies are marked by art exhibitions and gatherings which give school students the chance to meet and to compare notes on their different approaches to the that year's themes.

2.6 Publishing Initiatives

The Baltic States History Textbook Project

Textbooks are central to any realistic attempt to bring a European dimension into history teaching in the classroom. Ms Mare OJA presented a project which aims to foster mutual understanding in the Baltic States through the production of textbooks on the history of the three Baltic states. These books will then be integrated into a single textbook for use in classrooms both in the Baltic States and in other countries. The textbooks will be based upon a series of seminars and workshops, at which historians and history teachers from the Baltic states share their different national perspectives on the region's history.

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[6] For more information on the problems facing such countries, see:
History, Democratic Values and Tolerance in Europe: the Experience of Countries in Democratic Transition, Council of Europe, 1995;
The Reform of History Teaching in Schools in European Countries in Democratic Transition, Council of Europe, 1995.

Balkan Region History Project

Any such attempt to frame the national identities of a region needs to be based solidly on careful research, and an example of this in operation was Balkan Region History Project presented by Mr Ivan ILCHEV. This is essentially an academic research project, looking at the different national images prevalent in the Balkan region, not least in history textbooks. No-one needs to be told that this is an extremely sensitive area of research, and the meeting was told about national ministries refusing to recognise the existence of negative national images in their textbooks and, therefore, seeing no need to discuss them. At the moment the project is producing a series of bulletin-style publications, but it is hoped that the results will be published eventually in book form.

2.7 School Twinning

Twinning of Albanian Schools

Many of these projects involve some sort of twinning, whether of schools or of classes, but the Council of Europe has identified the case of Albanian schools as a special priority case. The Council's Twinning Programme for Albanian Schools seeks to help Albanian schools advance from the desperate isolation to which they were reduced under the Enver Hoxha regime by promoting close links with schools elsewhere in Europe and in the United States. The pitiful condition of Albanian schools make the urgent need for this sort of contact obvious. Clearly, history teachers have much to contribute to this programme.

2.8 The Work of UNESCO

Mr Hans-Wolf RISSOM represented UNESCO at the meeting, and he reported on some of the work carried out by UNESCO in the field of international contacts. UNESCO's remit is global rather than European, and it is, therefore, working to promote good practice in history teaching at a global level. For example, it is supporting an expansion of history teaching in Africa, and has produced a major general history of Africa to help support this work. It is also very keen to promote links between history teachers in different world regions, bringing teachers in Africa and North America together, for example, to look at ways of teaching about slavery, or teachers from Europe and South America to discuss Spanish and Portuguese settlements and conquests.

ASPRO

One of UNESCO's best known projects is its Associated Schools Project (ASPRO). This Project has been in existence for 40 years. It is based on the Associated Schools of the United Nations around the world, and involves teaching on specific topics laid down by the project, usually working towards a definite final product, such as an exhibition of pupils' work. Two of the projects outlined above, the Baltic Sea Project and the Blue Danube Project, are part of the ASPRO Programme. ASPRO has now grown to involve some 3,000 schools in 120 countries.

World Heritage Classes

UNESCO's World Heritage Classes are linked to the World Heritage Sites which have been created worldwide. The classes bring together mayors and other officials from different World Heritage Sites and students studying related topics. The participants work together to examine issues related to the Sites. Not surprisingly, this work involves very close co-operation with museums.

SECTION TWO

HOW TO SET UP AN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL HISTORY PROJECT

1. SELECTING A TOPIC

What will it be about? This is perhaps the most important question to be asked at the planning stage. However good the rest of the organisation might be, the project is not likely to succeed if the topic is wrong for the people involved. So, how to select a suitable topic for this sort of international project?

Interest

The first criterion to meet is that of interest. You, your pupils and your colleagues are going to spend a lot of time and effort looking into the topic in detail, so it must be something which will be of genuine interest to everyone involved. In most cases, this will mean choosing a theme that is relevant to the appropriate part of your national or regional curriculum, although you may be lucky enough to be able to depart from its detailed requirements.

The Type of Project

The choice of theme should form the basis for considering what form the project should take, and not *vice versa*. The theme will itself suggest appropriate strategies. For example, it may, as with the Hanseatic, Danube or Viking projects, suggest the most appropriate geographical area for the project. The Treaty of Versailles project is so obviously based around the nature of international negotiations that a simulation exercise suggests itself very easily. A local history or museum-based theme equally obviously suggests fieldwork, as in the European Heritage or Baltic Castles and Museums projects.

Which Countries?

Having decided on a theme and an appropriate type of project, the next stage is to decide on international partners. Sometimes these will be suggested by the theme, as with the regional projects in the Baltic and in Central Europe; sometimes you might have a free choice of countries to approach. Whichever countries you choose, it is important to know something of their educational systems and curricula. Embassies and consulates will be able to help with this information, and the Council of Europe is publishing a series of very handy booklets outlining the secondary education system in the different European

countries[7]. You do not want to find out too late that the theme of your project is not taught at the right age level in any of the countries with which you are hoping to work!

Broad and Narrow Themes

The experience of the projects outlined in this booklet suggests that even the most local of themes can form the basis of a successful international project, but if you are not thinking in terms of local history, it might be wise to consider some broad themes that are likely to appeal to a wide range of schools operating within a range of different educational systems. The Baltic Sea and Blue Danube projects point to the wide appeal of environmental themes, but historical themes also carry many possibilities.

One way is to look at very broad historical themes: "Conflict in Europe" rather than "The War of the Spanish Succession"; "Women in European History" rather than "Nuns in Fifteenth Century Flanders". On the other hand, you may find these themes too broad and ill-defined, and you may prefer to work on a relatively narrow theme in some depth. The EUROCLIO conferences on the Potsdam Conference and Philip II and Europe give examples of this. In this case, it would be worth selecting either a theme with obvious international implications, like the Celts or the Crusades. Another way would be to select a topic that is widely taught throughout Europe. Lists of these topics are available through the Council of Europe[8], though you will need to check that the topic is taught to an appropriate age group for the purposes of the project, and even that it is indeed taught to pupils in the particular school with which you want to work.

Non-Traditional History

Many of these topics, however, are drawn from political history of a fairly familiar kind. We need to be careful here. When we call an historical topic "familiar", we mean "familiar to us", the teachers. Pupils come to all these topics fresh. Nevertheless, it is important to look either into new themes or into new angles of old ones. For example, it could be interesting to consider themes in social history, or perhaps to bring out the social and economic aspects of a political topic. Can the project bring out the roles of minorities, or of women? Are there opportunities for adopting a multicultural approach?

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7 Guide to Secondary Education in Europe series, published as part of the project "A Secondary Education for Europe", Council of Europe, 1994-5

8 See The European Content of the School History Curriculum Council of Europe 1995, and Against Bias and Prejudice op. cit.

For example, it would be very odd indeed to consider the Empire of Philip II and not to bring in the point of view of the Ottoman Turks or of the Aztecs and Incas.

Local History and Archaeology

Whatever the theme, it is important to consider the scope for local history, museum work or archaeology. The Association of Museums and Castles Around the Baltic Sea, the City Beneath the City Project, and the European Heritage Classes all point to the potential which archaeology has for encouraging active work.

It is easy to think that all this suggests an early historical period, but we should not forget industrial or urban archaeology. A project based upon the spread of industrial culture in the Nineteenth Century could make very effective use of industrial heritage sites, some of them in major cities. On the other hand, in-depth study of earlier periods should not be confined (as it often is) to younger children, especially as it can throw up issues of major and current controversy. The ancient walls of Great Zimbabwe offer a solid challenge to the long-upheld Afrikaner claim that Southern Africa was largely empty of human habitation before the arrival of the Dutch, and that native Africans were incapable of establishing sophisticated civilizations.

Controversial Issues

This leads us into the whole area of considering the potential of international ventures for challenging myths and stereotypes. Although, to some extent, this may arise naturally through the theme of the project, it might be worth placing a sensitive or controversial issue right at the heart of the project. The European Studies Project, for example, focuses directly both on the Normans and on Seventeenth Century plantation and settlement, two highly charged issues in Irish history, and forces pupils to examine the myths that surround and threaten them.

2. THE FINAL PRODUCT

One of the most important questions to consider is the likely form of the project's final product. There are many possibilities for presenting results, including publication, recording a video, staging an exhibition, or writing the project up as a research paper. Choosing such options would depend upon the sort of people who will be taking part. Can the project produce something that will be of use to others who have not taken part in it? For example a resource pack or a production putting the historical example into a wider context? Whatever the project's end product, it needs to be defined from the start and integrated into the planning.

3. WHO WILL TAKE PART?

The projects described above are designed for a wide range of different audiences. It may be obvious for whom the project is designed, if only because of the age-range of the organisers' own pupils, but there are other considerations.

Initial teacher training institutions may be able to provide trainee teachers to help run the day-to-day activities of the project. There may be roles for pupils of different ages on the same project, or else pupils of different subjects. Many projects provide important openings for cross-curricular work, and it may be useful to present the project early on to colleagues in different subjects so that they consider possibilities for co-operation.

A project may need a contribution from an "expert" of some sort. This may be an academic historian, or an educationalist with a particular specialism relevant to the project. In this case, it is particularly important to consider the best way for academics, teachers and pupils to work together. One local project run by museums in Cambridge owed much of its success to the careful training given to the academic experts on how to work with young children[9]. Similarly, where academics and teachers are working together, it is worth considering distributing papers in advance and giving more time to questions and discussion rather than reading lectures.

A decision to be reached early on is whether or not the project will require pupils to travel. There are different ways of thinking about this. The potential advantages of visiting other parts of Europe and meeting counterparts face to face hardly need to be outlined. However, without considerable financial subsidies, this can be an exclusive approach, which disadvantages those who cannot afford it. This can apply both to pupils within one school and to pupils from particular countries. For this reason, a decision on whether the project is to be based on face-to-face contact or on electronic or postal contact will have important implications for deciding who is to be involved.

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[9] For further details, contact The Education Officer, Fitzwilliam Museum, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, 14, United Kingdom.

4. FINDING CONTACTS

Having decided on a suitable theme, a suitable range of participants and an appropriate type of project, the next stage is to find partner schools. It is absolutely vital not to make mistakes at this stage: a link with an unsuitable school or college can lead to complications and bad feelings all round. You can very easily get the wrong sort of link by seizing the first contact which comes along, without really checking it through. Many school links begin with some informal connection between a couple of members of staff, and you may indeed have found a very good school. But is it the right one for this specific project?

There are a number of agencies that can help in finding contacts. Your first stop should be your national government agency dealing with educational visits and exchanges. These agencies have the necessary knowledge and experience to find a suitable match for your purposes in any part of Europe. National Ministries of Education will be able to put you in touch with the relevant office.

Local and regional authorities should be high on anyone's list of contacts. They know the schools in their own areas and will be able to direct enquirers towards suitable schools or even to individual teachers. Through the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities in Europe, your local authority may even be able to help put you in touch with the relevant authority abroad. The Associated Schools Project of UNESCO could also provide useful contacts.

EUROCLIO is also an important network for contacts of this sort. It is an umbrella association of history teacher associations, and is particularly useful, therefore, for putting you in touch with a large number of history teachers in a particular country rather than with individual schools. A full list of the member associations of EUROCLIO is included in Appendix II.

One relatively easy way of finding potential contacts is to browse through the reports of relevant Council of Europe teacher conferences, where the names and addresses of participants are listed. However, it is important to be aware that the personnel in schools and agencies is constantly changing, as are addresses and telephone and fax numbers, so always check that the information you are using is up to date!

5. MANAGING YOUR PROJECT

Each project poses its own problems of management, but a number of important common issues arose from the discussions at Strasbourg.

National Co-ordinators

Many projects, of very different types, stressed how useful, even essential, they had found it to have one person in each participating country to act as an overall co-ordinator for the project within that country. The co-ordinators can both oversee the schools in their countries and act as a sort of executive for running the project. This can cut down on travelling expenses and the need for teachers to get leave of absence. A lot of their work can be carried out through electronic communications, although even the most technologically advanced projects stress the need for co-ordinators to meet at least once a year. Ideally, co-ordinators should be teachers or others involved in and committed to the project. It is not a position that should be given to an outside administrator. Every project reported that co-ordinators need a time allowance to carry out the work involved. The practice of extra payment for undertaking the duties of a co-ordinator varied from country to country, sometimes even within the same project. Ideally, of course, coordinators ought to be paid extra, but this will not always be feasible.

Language

There are a number of linguistic problems that need to be tackled. The first is to decide whether or not to have a single lingua franca for the project, and, if so, what it should be. Nearly all projects do choose to use one language, though the European Studies Project does encourage a diversity of languages. The chosen language is frequently English, though the Baltic States Textbook project uses Russian as its common language. In choosing English, however, you need to be aware of one or two points.

The first is that, however fluent the pupils may be, if they have to write a report in English this immediately becomes an assignment twice over: both a homework in history and in English. It will take some pupils considerable time before they are able to treat communication in a foreign language as routine. Don't push them too fast.

Secondly, the temptation when using English is to establish communication with an English speaking school. This has obvious benefits for the non-English speakers, but it does not help the cause of foreign languages in English-speaking schools.

Thirdly, it is important to be aware of small but significant differences of meaning even within a language. For example, is a "third grade" student, to use the American term, the same as a "third year" or "third form" student, to use the British terms? What is a "class"? Is it a fixed group of pupils who learn all their subjects together, or is it a group of pupils who only come together for this particular subject. In the latter case, each student is a member of many different classes.

Translation and Interprctation

If your plans involve translations, you should check the rules very carefully. Translation can be very costly. Indeed, it is by no means uncommon for translators to be paid more than the authors whom they are translating. Interpreting is a skilled job, which needs more than a few teachers or pupils who are proficient in a language. It can be very mentally tiring and requires frequent breaks. Interpreters can be hired but, like translators, they do not come cheap.

Newsletters and Bulletins

Whichever language you use, you will want to keep your partners up to date with events and developments by issuing newsletters and bulletins. This might be done through electronic communication, which is discussed below, but many projects issue a magazine or news-sheet of some sort. These provide a good opportunity for pupils to contribute articles or to publish their research findings. It is important to use as many channels for these as possible: we are not in competition with each other, after all. The better produced such materials are, the more pupils will want to read them, and the more committed they will feel to the project.

Desk-top publishing has greatly improved the quality of printed material that teachers can produce, but it may also be worth approaching local newspaper offices for advice about layout, writing style and enhancing the appeal of project publications. If you are holding a large gathering as part of the project, it is worth approaching your local newspaper not just for publicity, but to produce a news-sheet for the meeting. There is also the possibility of producing an internationally edited newsletter.

Mailing Lists

Clearly, it is vital to maintain and constantly to update full mailing lists. These should include postal addresses, telephone, fax and e-mail numbers, Internet addresses and any other relevant information. As noted earlier, it is important to remember that any or all of these details can change, as individuals, institutions and even whole countries appear and disappear. In this connection, do not worry too much if a school or a country seems to go "cool" on the project or drops out altogether. They may have good reasons. It is probably better to accept the situation once you are clear what the situation actually is, but, if you do need to remind schools of their commitment to the project, then do so gently. Encouragement will win more hearts than nagging!

6. VISITS AND EXCHANGES

Visits and exchanges are likely to be central to any project. Fortunately, there exists a great deal of experience and expertise on how to run them successfully.

Planning

The most obvious step is to consult Modern Language teachers, who frequently organise many such exchanges on a regular basis. Any teacher who has organised an exchange will stress the absolute importance of careful and detailed planning if the exchange is to be a success. The most crucial element is the allocation of pupils to their partners. Two Council of Europe publications offer detailed guidance on running exchanges.[10]

Contracts

Whether the link is to be temporary or to run for a number of years, much grief and anxiety can be avoided by setting down the arrangements for the link in a clear contract between the participating schools right from the start. As well as covering the nature and purpose of the link, this should cover a number of fine details in order to ensure an equitable sharing of responsibilities. For example, you will need to work out the fairest way to share travel costs, bearing in mind the different situations of the different schools. Where one school is in a large city with a cheap, integrated public transport system, another is in a city with a complex and expensive system, and a third is in a rural area served only infrequently by buses, it will not be fair simply to say that pupils will pay their own transport expenses. It is common for schools to cover their own air fares, but who is responsible for transport from the airport to the school? Who should arrange excursions, and who should pay for them? What disciplinary arrangements should there be? Anyone who has been involved in exchanges will confirm that these, and many other details, can, if they are not addressed from the start, produce problems and sour relationships. Don't leave them to sort themselves out as and when they arise!

7. ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

Postage can be ruinously expensive and infuriatingly slow: electronic communications are fast and relatively cheap. They are also open to all pupils within a school on equal terms, and do not exclude pupils who cannot afford to take part. On the other hand, electronic communications can create a new division between schools and countries with easy access to them and those without.

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[10] School Links and Exchanges in Europe: a Practical Guide, Council of Europe, 1992, outlines the detailed planning that goes into a successful exchange;
Teaching for Exchanges, Council of Europe, 1993, presents thoughts and discussion points for considering the role and nature of exchanges in the curriculum.

The problem with electronic communications is that they are relatively new, they are constantly changing, they employ ever more impenetrable jargon, and many teachers (and others) are either nervous or scornful of using them.

The answer is probably to provide teachers with more guidance on how to make use of new technologies, but some of the new technology changes so rapidly that guidance booklets are out of date in a matter of months. All this guide can do, therefore, is to offer a general introduction to the technology available and some ideas on how it can be used in running an international project.

Fax

The first and most commonly available of these technologies is the fax machine. This is of obvious use for sending letters and documents quickly; it can also be used for sending articles for inclusion in a newsletter. However, it is not ideal for sending long documents, especially as most school fax machines need to be used by the whole school. -

Within the framework of the project "A Secondary Education for Europe", the Council of Europe has published a monograph entitled "The Fax! Programme"[11] which encourages schools to develop an international, multi-lingual fax newspaper. The monograph examines the educational benefits of such an activity and provides guidelines on how to set up and run fax! programmes.

Electronic Mailing

Electronic mail (e-mail) works differently in that, instead of being sent to a central machine - as will often be the case with fax in schools - it is sent directly to your personal "mailbox". This means that you will need fairly constant access to a computer which can receive e-mail. This need only be a small computer and a slow (and therefore cheaper) modem (see below). The mailboxes will be provided by a Bulletin Board System (BBS), many of which are also connected to the Internet. The BBS system can also set up an electronic mailing list, which means that a "letter" sent to one e-mail address is automatically sent to all the others on the list. E-mail is easy to use, unlike sending faxes, and does not involve standing over the machine feeding sheets of paper slowly through it. On the other hand, it can only send text. Non-English speakers may find that they cannot use some of the alphabetical characters used in their languages.

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[11] The Fax! Programme , Council of Europe 1994

The Internet[12]

The Internet is by far the most powerful of the technologies available to schools. Not only does it offer all the participating parties access to the same material, but it offers access to all the material that has been placed on the Internet around the world. It allows you to send messages through e-mail and to print documents or pictures, in colour if necessary. Despite the jargon, it is not difficult to learn to use it.

You will need:

- access to a telephone line;
- a computer;
- a modem. This is a device which links the telephone line to the computer. It will either be already in your computer, or you will need to buy one and attach it. Modems are graded according to the speed at which they transmit text. A faster modem is an advantage for using the Internet, you have to spend less time "on line". E-mail, on the other hand, does not require a fast modem;
- a subscription to an Internet provider.

Co-ordinators will need in addition:

- an electronic mailing list;
- a system operator to advise on technical problems;
- an Internet service provider.

Choosing a Provider

There are a number of different Internet providers, including many Electronic Mail BBSs. Some countries have at least one provider which specialises in educational use. It is possible, for example, to limit access to the whole Internet in order to prevent access to unsuitable material. New providers are constantly appearing, and their services vary. Ideally, you want one that can be reached on a cheaper, local telephone line. Some providers will expect more technical expertise of subscribers than others; some are

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[12] I am greatly indebted to Mr Wigo Skramm of the Viking Network for his generous help with this section.

cheaper than others, or offer their services free for the first month or so. Many can offer subscribers exclusive access to particular areas of information. Some providers are very popular with subscribers, but subscribing to a popular provider brings the risk of having problems in accessing it because the lines are always busy.

When choosing a provider, it is worth checking the following:

- that its software is compatible with your hardware;
- how much the subscription is, for how long and on what terms;
- what sort of technical support it offers;
- whether there are any extra hidden charges.

How can the Internet be used in the classroom?

There are two main educational uses for the Internet: as a database and as a means of communication. There are many different databases available, of different types. The two most commonly used in educational projects are:

(i) Gopher

This system is common in universities and is of great use to schools embarking on projects requiring research. It allows you to search for databases using menus, so that you do not need to know beforehand the address of the database for which you are looking. Its odd name comes from a corruption of the English phrase "Go for", and most of the information on Gopher is only available in English. Gophers are text-based, and do not show graphics, sound or video material;

(ii) World Wide Web (WWW)

This operates in a similar way to Gophers, but "Windows" or "Apple Mac" software allows you to use graphics, sound and small videos. You can prepare a WWW with any multi-media computer and a scanner. A WWW needs to be put onto a provider connected to the Internet 24 hours a day. Most people rent disc-space from a provider to store their WWW. When using a WWW for a project, it is best to make each page a separate "story". This makes it easier to "download" material and photocopy it for classroom use. When setting up a network, it is a good idea to insist on a contribution to a WWW as the "membership fee" for each participating school.

Many teachers will feel the need to be introduced gently to this technology, and they may well be happy to let pupils take charge of the technical side of their project. At the very least, pupils should be encouraged to make use of e-mail outside lesson times.

Co-ordination

It is highly advisable to appoint a co-ordinator to oversee electronic communications, either for a whole project or for each individual school. A steering group of teachers also helps to provide support for teachers who might otherwise feel rather lost. Do not feel discouraged if, from time to time, teachers or pupils appear to lose interest in the technology, especially as it inevitably means long periods of using a foreign language.

8. RAISING MONEY

None of the projects represented in Strasbourg could provide an instant or easy answer to the essential question of how to raise money, and they all reported money problems. There are possibilities, but raising money is time-consuming and difficult. If you have a colleague with the right skills, it would be worth appointing someone with the official brief of raising funds for the project.

What is the Money For?

This may sound an obvious question, but it needs to be worked out in fine detail. It is easy to overlook items and to find you have not budgeted for them when the final bill is presented. Bills for postage, stationery and telephone are easy to forget, as is VAT. Go through every detail of your budget and check that you know who is paying for each item.

Sponsorship

Once you have got a very clear idea of what you actually need, you are in a better position to ask for help in getting it. It is highly unlikely that you will find a sponsor willing to finance the whole project, but, if you can identify one particular item - stationery, for example, or software - it might be possible to obtain specific sponsorship for that. Equally, if the project is likely to get good levels of publicity, you might be able to get a company to provide particular equipment or facilities at a reduced rate, perhaps in return for some advertising in the new-sheet.

There are a number of potential sponsors for international projects in history, including the various programmes of the European Union, for example the Socrates Programme. For non-school based multilateral projects funding may be available from European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe and the Youth for Europe Programme of the European Union. The Council of Europe publishes a very handy guide to making

applications to the EYF[13], which contains a number of useful hints which apply equally well to applications to other sources of funding. The Soros Foundation may be able to provide funding for projects in Central and Eastern Europe.

Applying for Sponsorship

It is crucial to put as much time and effort as possible into researching the bid beforehand. Find out as much as you can about the firm, institution or fund you are hoping to approach, and make sure your bid does actually meet its criteria. If it does not, apply somewhere else, if it does, make sure that your bid is crystal clear.

Be aware of limitations on any grants. European Union projects, for example, normally have to be completed within a single year and the beneficiaries frequently have to put their own money up first before they receive a grant. There may be discrepancies between countries, with some countries funding things that others will not. For example, the French authorities have helped to subsidise the European Heritage classes, but other countries have not been able to do so.

Joint Funds

If you set up a joint fund for an international project, make sure you know exactly who has control over it. The Blue Danube Project ran into difficulties with ambiguities over the precise ownership of its joint fund.

[13] How to apply for a grant from the European Youth Foundation, EYF, Youth Directorate, Strasbourg, 1993.

9. POSTSCRIPT

INTO THE FUTURE: THE ROLE OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Since the events of 1989-1991 in Central and Eastern Europe, there has been a tremendous upsurge of interest in the potential of history both to further and to hamper international understanding. The importance of history teaching was specifically noted in the Final Declaration of the Vienna Summit of 1993, and it may well feature in a Resolution or Declaration to be adopted by the Council of Europe's Standing Conference of the European Ministers of Education in 1997. In that year the Council of Europe will begin a new three-year project on the History of Europe in the Twentieth Century, which will examine issues of teacher training and ways of teaching controversial and sensitive issues in European history.

The Council of Europe continues to work at both inter-governmental level and at disseminating information on good classroom practice. With this in mind, it is hoped that this guide may be of help in encouraging international contacts between schools in Europe.

APPENDIX I

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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H MOFFAT
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F WEISS
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CULTURAL ROUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

The Council of Europe's Cultural Routes
Information document

Routes - Newsletter of the Council of Europe Cultural Routes
Newsletter

GUIDES TO SECONDARY EDUCATION

The following **guides to secondary education** have been published:

Albania
Austria
Bulgaria
Denmark
England
Estonia
Flemish community of Belgium
France
Germany
Greece
Ireland
Italy
Liechenstein
Malta
The Netherlands
Norway
Poland
Scotland
Slovenia
Spain
Switzerland

APPENDIX II

LIST OF MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS OF EUROCLIO

Austria
Konferenz für Geschichtsdidaktik österreich
Postbox 154
A-1015 Vienna

Pädagogische Akademie des Bundes
Ms Elisabeth BUXBAUM
Ettenreichgasse 45 a
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